

## **Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of the Claims will replace all prior listings and versions of the Claims in the application.

## **Listing of the Claims**

Claims 1-18 (cancelled)

Claim 19 (currently amended): A tool suitable for use with split shot comprising:

- a) a thimble comprising an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end;
- b) a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position near the open end, the curved blade having a curvature approximately matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at the position, the curved blade extending beyond the closed end; and
- c) means for attaching the tool to clothing.

Claim 20 (cancelled)

Claim 21 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 19, wherein the thimble comprises a metal chosen from the group consisting of aluminum, steel, stainless steel, brass and copper.

Claim 22 (currently amended): A method of opening a split shot having a closed slot that is crimped around a fishing line comprising the steps of:

- a) placing a tool onto a finger tip, the tool comprising a thimble having an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, and wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end, and a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position near the open end, the curved blade having a

curvature approximately matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at the position, the curved blade extending beyond the closed end;

- b) placing the curved blade into the closed slot; and
- c) manipulating the curved blade to open the slot.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade comprises pushing on the curved blade.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade comprises twisting the curved blade.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein manipulating the curved blade comprises dragging the curved blade through the slot.

Claim 26 (currently amended): The tool of Claim 19, wherein said [[clip]] means comprises [[spring metal]] an aperture in the body near the open end and a loop through said aperture.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein said thimble comprises a sewing thimble.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein said thimble comprises metal.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The method of Claim 28, wherein said thimble and said curved blade each comprise a metal selected from the group consisting of aluminum, steel, stainless steel, brass and copper.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, said tool comprising a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The method of Claim 30, wherein the "U" shaped clip comprises spring metal.

Claim 32 (previously presented): The method of Claim 31, wherein the spring metal comprises spring steel.

Claim 33 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, wherein the blade subtends an angle of about 60° of the approximately circular open end of the body at the position.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, said tool comprising means for crimping a split shot, the means attached to the thimble.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The method of Claim 34, wherein said means comprises a "U" shaped clip, the "U" shaped clip having an open end and a closed end, the "U" shaped clip being attached to the thimble roughly opposed from the curved blade such that the open end of the "U" shaped clip is near the closed end of the thimble.

Claim 36 (currently amended): A tool suitable for use with split shot comprising:

- a) a thimble comprising an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end;
- b) a ~~[[curved]]~~ blade attached to the thimble at a position near the open end, ~~on the first portion which is near the second portion, the curved blade having a curvature matching a radius of curvature of the thimble at the position~~, the ~~[[curved]]~~ blade extending slightly beyond the closed end; and
- c) ~~at least one of a loop attached to the body and an aperture in the body near the open end~~ suitable for attaching the tool to a fisherperson's vest or to a lanyard device.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 19, wherein said means comprises a loop attached to the body.

Claim 38 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 19, wherein said means comprises an aperture in the body near the open end.

Claim 39 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 19, wherein the tool comprises a first portion extending from the closed end which approximates a part of a right angle cone between two parallel planes each of which is normal to an axis of the cone, and a second portion extending from the first portion which approximates a cylinder and wherein the curved blade is attached to the thimble at a position on the first portion which is near the second portion.

Claim 40 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 19 attached to a fisherperson's vest.

Claim 41 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 19, said tool comprising means for crimping a split shot.

Claim 42 (previously presented): The tool of Claim 41, said means for crimping a split shot comprising a "U" shaped clip.

Claim 43 (new): The method of Claim 22, wherein the curved blade has a curvature matching the radius of curvature of the thimble at the position.

Claim 44 (new): A method of opening a split shot having a closed slot that is crimped around a fishing line comprising the steps of:

- a) placing a tool onto a finger tip, the tool comprising a thimble having an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, and wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end, and a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position near the open end, the curved blade having a concave side, the concave side in contact with the thimble at the position, the curved blade extending beyond the closed end;
- b) placing the curved blade into the closed slot; and
- c) manipulating the curved blade to open the slot.

Claim 45 (new): A tool suitable for use with split shot comprising:

- a) a thimble comprising an approximately circular open end and an approximately circular closed end and a body between the open end and the closed end defining a cavity adapted to receive a finger within the cavity, wherein the open end has a larger radius than the closed end;
- b) a curved blade attached to the thimble at a position near the open end, the curved blade having a concave side, the concave side in contact with the thimble at the position, the curved blade extending beyond the closed end; and
- c) means for attaching the tool to clothing or to a lanyard device.

Claim 46 (new): The method of Claim 22, wherein said tool comprises means for attaching the tool to clothing.

Claim 47 (new): The method of Claim 22, wherein said tool comprises means for attaching the tool to a lanyard device.